the Karkad road, the villagers had acquired the necessary land according to the directions of the Government. But it was regrettable that the road had not yet been completed. A sum of Rs. 3,000 was being allotted annually for the opening and maintenance of roads leading to Sambavar villages. But the major portion of it lapsed at the end of each year. The work might well be entrusted to the villagers concerned.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Madhavan, in regard to the first point of your representation, *viz.*, training of Sambavar women in midwifery and child-welfare, the Administrative Board, Medical Services, informs me that they have already seven qualified Sambavar women under training and they will do their best to increase the number.

In regard to the question of appointments, these are being made in accordance with qualifications and efficiency.

The question of scholarships has already been considered more than once by the Director of Public Instruction and other educational officers of the State, and you are aware of the decisions that have been come to already.

Your representation in the matter of nominations to the Council will be borne in mind.

As regards the Nagercoil Municipality, since you are so strong in the neighbourhood, I do not see why in a reasonable time you should not be able to get your members in by vote.

You have also referred to the question of the Karkad road. The Government are in complete sympathy with your desire and were anxious to carry out this beneficent work for the good of the people of the neighbourhood of Suchindram. They had drawn up plans and estimates and were ready to provide money. But that benevolent intention was not carried out because the proposal was vetoed by the Legislative Council.

Your other representations will be noted for consideration.

167. Needs of the Catholic Arasars of South Travancore.

MR. X. ALEXANDER (*Member, Nominated*) said that the main occupations of the Catholic Arasars were fishing and marketing the fish caught. For fishing purposes, *catamarans* were used. But the varieties of timber that could be made use of for making *catamarans* were not available in the coast villages and had to be brought down from inland forests and private lands. It was very difficult to purchase such timber from private persons. The Government could easily supply the timber required from their forests. Depôts should therefore be opened in coast villages for the sale of *catamaran* timber. Fuel could also with advantage be sold in those depôts inasmuch as that article of necessity was also not easily obtainable in coast villages.

The need for a road from Colachel to Tengapattanam was a long-standing complaint. Last year, when that matter was pressed, the Government rejected the request, the road being considered a luxury. As a matter of fact, it was an absolute necessity for facilitating the brisk trade in fish, copra, coir, etc., carried on in the eleven coast villages situated between the two towns. The villagers could also have prompter medical aid when necessary. Further, they had to go to Colachel even to post a letter.

The fisherfolk were proverbially uneducated and filthy. Their houses were not kept clean and they did not know the rules of sanitation. They dried their fish on the patches of ground in front of their houses. The villages were often subject to epidemics like small-pox and cholera. Some years ago, a conservancy agency was appointed by the Government to look after the sanitation of the coast villages, but that had been withdrawn. Arrangements should be made for the villages being inspected from time to time by a Sanitary Inspector, who should render the villagers all help in fighting out the diseases.

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More than 90 per cent. of the Catholic Arasars had no houses of their own. They lived in huts huddled together and situated on lands belonging to others. The Arasars could not avail themselves of the concessions granted by the Government in the matter of assignment of *puduval* lands to depressed classes, as the areas earmarked for them were situated in the interior, while the Arasars had to live on the coast. All available *porambokes* and unregistered lands on the coast should therefore be reserved for the exclusive use of the Arasar community and the Protector of the Depressed Classes should be instructed to see to the needs of the community in that direction. A large exent of *poramboke* land was available close to the unused and abandoned salt pans at Colachel. That could be set apart for house-sites for the Arasars. In reply to a representation made on the same subject last year, it was stated that an enquiry would be instituted to see how far the order of 1922 directing the assignment to the Arasars of building sites not exceeding 10 cents in each case was being availed of by them. They were ignorant of the concession and many still remained homeless. If the Protector of the Depressed Classes be specially instructed to do the needful in the matter, the member would co-operate with him in his work.

One of the vital needs of the Arasars was the opening of schools for teaching improved methods of fishing and extracting fish oil. That was very necessary for the material welfare of the community. The Fisheries Department was rendering similar help to the *Valans* living on the shores of the Vembanad backwater. It was in the sea south of Quilon that fish yielding oil was available and therefore teaching the Arasar boys a scientific and an up-to-date process of extracting the oil would do immense good. A factory for the extraction of fish oil would also open up employment to the community in another direction.

The Arasars were following only the primitive methods of catching fish. The Fisheries Department had not done anything to introduce among the community improved and safer methods of catching fish. Necessary steps should be taken in the matter.

In order to develop foreign trade in fish, co-operative credit banks, substantially aided by the Government, were necessary. Co-operative societies of Arasars should also be formed. The rule against the formation of co-operative societies on a communal basis should be abrogated. Co-operative societies consisting of all classes of people were good in theory ; but in practice they were dominated by the stronger members leaving the weaker to help themselves. A report on the subject by the Registrar of Co-operative Societies was under the consideration of the Government, and final orders should be passed thereon after considering his representation also.

DEWAN'S REPLY : Mr. Alexander, the attempts to establish two fuel depôts even in larger places like Trivandrum and Nagercoil have proved a failure for some reason or other. It is inevitable that the establishment of fuel depôts in small places can be worked only at a loss to the State. Therefore the provision of fuel obtained from Government forests is carried out more satisfactorily by contractors than by State agency. I shall, however, ask the Conservator of Forests, as an experimental measure, to open two depôts where you can get your timber for *catamarans* or *chalatadies*.

You have heard already what I had to say about the Colachel-Tengapattanam road and to that I have nothing to add.

Regarding sanitation in sea-coast villages, there are now 16 new conservancy stations established and I understand one or two of them are in fishing villages. But the Sanitary Commissioner has already realised the necessity for further assistance towards sanitation in fishing villages and he will proceed to consider that question.

As regards registry of *puduval* lands, Government's difficulty is to find sufficient *porambokes* alongside the sea-coast, where alone it can be serviceable to fisherfolk. In regard to what I said last year at the Assembly, I shall make enquiries as to why it was not possible to give effect to the request then made.

Your views in the matter of co-operative credit societies will be placed before the Registrar of Co-operative Societies for examination and report to Government.

The other points of your representation will all be noted down for consideration.

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